Sola Poēta

III

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Issue III

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Sola Poēta
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GALINSKY GROCERY
MAIN ENTRANCE
GALINSKY
PERFECTLY
PASTEURIZED
MILK
FANCY CHEAP GROCERIES
MILK BUTTER CHEESE
FRUITS & VEGETABLES
1

Blood Worm Moon

March 14, 2025

… how can you tell
If a painted apple
conceals a painted worm …
Still Life by JBL

ten thousand years ago
during the dying of the age of ice
when the woolly mammoth
walked the earth
and the worms
that laced the frozen land
had lived their last
unlasting hour
in the continents of home
their slowly stilling
vermiculation
like the tracing of the fingers
of the souls of time
as it was
with all the grubbing
that we sometimes do
at the melt lines
of a winter garden coming into spring
with the cold retreat

of filthy snows
like the rotting cotton
of the sun
we see the holes
where water seethes
and washes over
the briefly drowning world
consider then
the lakes that came and went
where gelid mountains
dropped their burdens
and gravel-grassy berms
emerged like creature shoulders
of a swimmer's green

what then
of the worm moon
lonesome for the loss
this year
the crimson wound
appearing in the skies of almost spring
a herald to the thaw
that satisfies the appetite of birds
returning to the fields
and lawns

the waking in the frost of things
come swimming round the roots
where loosening occurs
like shrugging off a question
no one understands

why then the sorrow magnifies
the burning light
as European worms
might mourn the rain
that celebrates the mud
emergent as they slip the noose
that shapes a peril in the farmer's clay

we're but a shadow of a wave
that darkens as it
shapes the sand
and sifts the fossils
on the shore
the polished glass
the shattered shells
pearlescent undersides revealed
the cooling moment
and the gull cry
fading like the warming stream

that slips desire
where it sheds its name
in tapestries of deepening blue

and the blood moon
with its season
of a single night
amazes every womb tide of the world
by shallowing the depths
and deepening the shallows
of the waters of the body
and the waters
of the mind …

Saturday Morning Art Class with Greg Curnoe

Elsie Perrin Williams Memorial Art Gallery and Museum, London, Ontario, 1960

This covey of middle class kids impeccably
dressed don paint-splattered aprons to splash
watercolour about on sheets of paper, sprawled
on the hardwood floor, surprised by freedom.
It just takes them a while to get into the flow.
My job is to make and serve coffee for Greg,
to prepare the paints and paper and to clean up
in the huge sink afterwards. Papers rolled up to
take home, though the paint wasn't dry. Rejects
crumpled and tossed. Muddy cups and brushes.
Smeared colours swirl down the drain as action
paint, its own spontaneous defiance of stability.

Suppose

London, Ontario, 1960

Jack drew fine charcoal portraits
at Art Mart's November meet.
Assuming the pose of a poet, I
gazed off to unfocussed distance,
to poetic dimensions far from
the mundane. Thus he drew me,
chin thrust beyond perspective,
foregrounded at vain sixteen.
My father attempted correcting
the angle of incidence, my chin.
He only succeeded in blurring
Jack`s outline. Then he tossed
the ruined drawing to the trash.
And I lost the chance to be so
immortalized by this universal
painter, until I resurrect a scrap
of recall in this page for Jack.

Starry Night

—for Stéphane Larue
"E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle"
—Dante (Inferno XXXIV, 139)

The poet laments:
If only I had the good fortune
when I was young
of dashing through the dunes
of Sahara in a four-wheel drive
staring at swirls of stars
letting the constellations guide my verse
through the dark of times

Instead I was a cash-strapped student
sleeping in musty tenements
picking up shifts as a *plongeur*
in Vieux-Montreal bistros
As if Van Gogh
could not see it
through the iron bars
of his asylum window
As if a *plongeur*
couldn't step out for a smoke
in the alley and look up
and admire the starry night.

Listopad

—for Bucha

Fog of war envelops Europe
London and Paris darken earlier
Rocket flares light up the eastern sky
Planes blown up in dog-fights
glow like fireflies in the night
somewhere the mad tsar in his fortress
invents a world of his own
imagines history as a sock-puppet show

It's the month of Listopad
leaves fall over mud paths
and craters left by mortars
a red layer covers
trenches and bunkers
on former frontlines

In the forests wild hogs
step on landmines and explode
I drink chocolate in a warm café
next to a charred supermarket
strewn with ashes and fallen shelves

Every yard of this land is haunted
by those who fell fighting for it
They will inhabit TVs and toasters
carried over to apartments
in Irkutsk and Yekaterinburg
They'll howl in the night
so that nobody anywhere
from Kola Peninsula to Kamchatka
can sleep again

The buildings are collapsed castles of cards
and cottages are dollhouses
with walls caved in
A baby nursery spattered with debris
cribs full of glass shards and bricks
I try hard to swallow disgust
thinking of love poems
to write once back home

Bombarded boulevards
Piles of carbonized cars
Young flesh rotting
on the banks of Dnieper
and all this killing
what was it for?

For every sawed-off leg
every disfigured cadaver
we shall not rest till we deliver
you all to the *fucking* Hague

Democracy is Dead in the USA

how can you run when you know?
—Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, *Ohio*

This will never be didactic.
Nor a list of horrid wrongs.
It's not that kind of poem.

I could have *wrote*
of Russian hacks. How Elon
knows his way around a
computer's wall of fire.
How the drones
disappeared in the press.
The erasure of
they & *them.* The history
of the Black now
whited-out.
The expulsion
of a human
who is *legally*
no more.

That Paula's
no longer welcome
to kick the ball,

its checkered
cream & sable—unless she
goes back to *Paul.* Shreds
her Sunday dress.

But I won't *scrawl* that kind
of poem.

Everyone's read the news.
There's no need
to merely tell it like it is.
How Ukraine's under the
bus. How Palestine
will simply never *be.*
That there's no such thing as
swaths of *genocide*—rolled
up good and tight
like bales of hay—

not while Jesus'
chosen vessel
is in charge.

The boats of Panama—his.
The goose of Canada—his.

Greenland's just a greenback—
the shade of an American
buck.

Maybe you're expecting
how we'll all rise up together
in a swell. A surge
to wash the White
away from House. It's
simply not my cup
of Boston tea.

In the end
I cannot say it.
Regurgitate
cliché.

But we've been here
once before,
while all was
embryonic:

Won't you please come to
Chicago
just to sing?

We can change the world.

Seagulls
snatching *fries*
along the beach.
Strewn about
like soldiers
on the shore.
Face-down
in *sacrifice.*
If they have
a face, that is.
Their sour *vinegar.*
Some Friday afternoon
at 3 o'clock.

I'm just
across the lake
from red & blue,
its stars of milky
light—now fifty
coins of silver
in their pocket,

still waving in the
gale just like a
friend, ever-flailing
back and forth
for our attention.

NOTE: The 4 lines in italics, pages 13-14,
are taken from the song, *Chicago,* by Graham Nash.

Clair de Lune
—for Rico

Our moon's a prime
example of less-is-
more. Its slivered,
crescent shine. Its mountains
on the brim of light and
dark. Risen like a curve
of chiselled braille.

Like a face that's
glimpsed in *profile,*
never looking you
in the eye. Its mix of
smooth and scar
that's nearly hidden.
A veil in silhouette.
A broad, funereal
umbra. Mourning
yet another
cataclysm—maybe
our existence.

If I could only
read its message

then I'd share it with
the earth. My telescope:
the perfect
go-between.
As it was for Galileo.
Its sibilance
in his ear that we are
specks along the edge,
as far away from centre
you could get. That it's only
with our eyes shut
we can see. Why the blind will
know its language. Its sickle
in the stars. Singing we are
triflings to be threshed.
Its notes on a single
staff. Not crescendo
but a piece by
Debussy: serene,
misleadingly uplifting,
which I never learned to
play
when I had the
chance,

so caught
up in the sky
while just a boy,

its shadows and its gleam,
its trembling, bleeding
voices in the night.

an anorexic dream for the queen of open wounds

slowly to work through purplegrey
seven a.m. rain and the hands that reach up
out of the melting snow and the young
children left sleeping in gutters in doorways in
empty parking lots and the prayer is
worthless when placed next to the act the
movie is never as good as the book and i
am still thinking about danny's suicide
twenty two years later

i am still singing the songs from
the summer i met you

the theoretician

hand in the lion's mouth and
mouth filled with broken glass

this is no way to live but
your options have begun to run out

the fire has
consumed everything it could

picture a long empty hall
leading to a small empty room

doesn't need to be anywhere
you've ever been

picture sunlight

close your eyes

in this nation of thieves &
cowards you're no one special

in this nation of absolute failure
you could be anyone at all

The Day You Said You're Swiss

Your strait
jacket's
replaced by a tux.

Padded walls
now like the spikes
from an iron maiden.
There's
no where left
to trip. You did it
in your socks.
Every crime
that's simmered
in the skin of grazing
sheep.

Your shoes
are polished
on the hour,

blue on pink on blue.

Why did you wait
until I died

to tell me that you
loved me?

When the cuckoo
in the clock
sung it out for me,
your reckless
bidding,
a call from
the sanest
one on
earth who's yet to fly.

Karela

Through love all pain will turn to medicine
— Rumi

Floating in an avalanche
of bitter gall and churning bane
your jagged lips of toothy scabs
form grinning spiky half moons
bobbing up and down my saucepan
spitting blackened chunks of bile.

Skimming with my slotted spoon
I reach inside to taste you
one snaggled lip at a time
a slap to my senses, an
affront to my stability of mind.

You, sir, are no gentleman.
Your roguish mouth afflicts me
foul, detestable and vile
a bitter gourd, a nasty brew
a hairball sticking in my gullet.

You are indeed a strange umami
mouthfeel—rubber like a treaded tire

acrid pus scraping and scratching
down my throat.

They say that bitterness is good,
a necessary cleansing of the palate.
I am back again for more:
one caustic moon after another.

If this is an acquired taste
I give you leave to slink
your venom down my craw:
Your bitter pill I swallow and ingest,
a potion I transmute into a healing joy.

Forest Odyssey

The forest stimulated it, the woods of yen,
As we disrobed and sauntered through the moistened leaves
To permit our skins to let loose their caprice
In tiny twitches and titillations ethereal.

The scrumptious touch of branches studying the course
Between the world and flesh proved most reliable
Of all imaginable ways of being more
Than innermost enthusiasms of the young.

The legions of leaves, the varied mosses, strands, and streams
Indebtedness we owe for all those delicacies ---
A license to release impulses and let in rain
Of curt composed connections and golden bars of Sun.

Into the forest, an exodus of communion
We chanced upon a shady site and bright retreat
That thickets rich and copses plush hereafter grant ---
So cool is all beloved's touch at least in leaves.

Trek of Self-Destruction

They arrive from some
remote region.
Gravediggers gesture
to them from the fields.

They swoop down
en route to white dreams,
beguiled beneath
a blanched sun.
They come in casual
contact with back roads
and rough terrain,
but fail to caress
the crack of dawn
or the potential poet
who staggers nightly
in the heated shadows
of his bungalow.
Well water inspirits
and they spread them
carelessly, just as
callously as critics.

They fail to notice
the furrowed fields
or frail saplings.
Their gangling shades
malinger, skim over
and imbue the lake.
They have blotted out
any remembrance
of a boundlessness
of flaming flesh
and are deaf to the
winds upon the water
or burbling froth
below a bowsprit.

Jackals hotfoot to
higher grounds,
abandoning the woods
to mobster butchers;
but these gloomy
gadabouts have
carte blanche, and
drift as they damned-
well please in the
thick of the wreckage.

Aurora

A disorderly scattering
of stars whirled partially
away as light ascends
on winds and glacial grass
keenly sprayed with gales
of dispirited, broken leaves,
grounds the world again.

I arise and enwrap them
within my head, make them
cozy, authenticate them,
unify them; the day-trippers
I welcome outside this pane
may call this their safe place.

At my home I am subordinate
to wasted leaf, bough, and star,
but in stretching out broadly,
I cling to the creative heart
that alters courses of action
at this one window, suitable
to fully replenish
my little universe.

Rings of Reticence

Among the trees there are lessons
to be learnt. If we're alert and are willing
to be taught, they're the sole source of
rescuing us from a serious sky for they
fall into light's broad field of vision;
brave new branches of Summer
developing leaves in our
circulatory system.

Trees have an ability to catch wind of
everything we utter, Time's wind in their
rough exteriors where the vagabond's
moon's immense mouth diminishes
come Dawn into delicate tenuous strands.

Our final resting place is a well-kept secret;
no one is grounded in Earth who made us —
the place where everyone has images
of emptiness, lights in rings of reticence.

Each of us expects much more than this
material world; we're unable to take it
as hard as and as profoundly as the trees,
nor require as much time to hop the stick
and perish forever.

Personal Touch

Sticking a pencil
in the sharpener hole...
now that really
must have been something.
And running its wooden head
over the razor...
round end in hand
but couldn't you just
feel the lead
honing thinner and thinner
to its point.

And then back to the page,
and the first sentence
with that freshly whetted implement
as thin and clear and lilting
as waves on a calm sea.
You could write a letter in pencil,
not so mistakes could be easily erased,
but to sense the words
peeling lovingly off the gray
onto the sheets.
You could hold that pencil
tight but gentle as if it were
the person you were writing to.

And you'd feel their response to every line
the moment you were writing it.

So you'd get angry sometimes
at the replies,
snap the lead.
But then it'd be back to the sharpener,
the hole and the razor,
a new instrument from old,
a pile of close shavings.

Abandoned Love

We didn't run over it exactly.
It's not roadkill. It's not the victim of a crime.
No, affection is not blood and guts in a ditch somewhere.

And nor is it laid up in a hospital bed,
webbed by breathing and feeding tubes,
expecting us to come pay a visit.

It's not marooned on a desert island.
It wasn't left behind on Mars.
We didn't let it sleep its way beyond our train stop.

And it wasn't tossed down a well.
Or thrown overboard from a cruise-ship.
Or crushed or crumpled in a junk yard.

In fact, it was love itself that did the abandoning.
Its martyrdom is only a pretense.
It left the two of us in bed one day and never returned.

Now we've split up, love likes to pretend
that it's living back at the old place still.
It's full of opinions, sated with theories.

It reckons that we are not worthy of its company.
But if we ever want to try again,
it's not doing anything at the moment.

We Started A Game We Never Got To Finish

I once thought all wars ended,
they had to, inevitably,
never expecting age's revelation
of just how eternally stubborn
conflict can be,
confirming the way unprocessed battles
carry on indefinitely, spiritually, even,
once curled up physical dimensions collapse
as a graveyard of unfinished scenes
left hanging:

panting climbers holding hooks
they've dug into walls
of a tower whose occupants
won't open windows
until scaling beings
learn polite breathing

or a hilltop fort
where one warrior
halfway up the slope
waist-deep in mud
and the bodies of their brethren,

fires an infinitely loaded Kalashnikov
at fortifications promising they'll lower the gate
once our warrior lowers their weapon
and *fixes that attitude*,
though they won't
as long as a belief persists
that ceasefires do nothing
but invite insidious critical strikes.

So they freeze on,
paralyzed tableaus and static standoffs
each driven relentlessly into their present.

Chess, Not Checkers

I tell people
I quit my job
helping new arrivals settle
for how sad it is
seeing hopeful lights in their eyes,
    kindled when we were, to them,
    still two-dimensional photos
    or part of a map,
before that glimmer dies
when I reveal
our public institutions'
thorough corruptions,
the bribes they'll have to pay
if they wish to function in our space,
how all cops are on the take,
how often they'll have to
    just look away
until they develop an instinctual sixth sense
for rising injustices
and turn in another direction
before witnessing disturbing actions.

I say that's it,
and it is part of why I quit
but I truly did so
for how gazes
from those unable to accept these twisted traditions
turned into quiet interrogations
asking me how I can live with myself
calmly living among this,
each transformed expression's
expressed disappointment
a judgement from who I once was, someone
I don't feel able to face.

A Friendship

Autumn.
The sky
white. Ravens' wingbeats
sew long seams
across the silence.
I, returning,
stand uncertain
at the forest's edge.

Years have trodden down
the path. But the gate,
lichened, slow
to open. Once,
the house breathed, welcomed
with woodsmoke. Now
a hare, startled,
runs from the clearing.

And emptiness. Behind
dull blank windows, nothing.
The roses at the door
choked with elder.

What was
now lies
in some small closed cabinet
of time, a drawer
not forgotten, but long
untouched.

Friend, where were you
all those years?
We should
have met earlier than this,
there might have been
a handclasp, understanding. Now
I must turn back alone.

W Motelu Pod Gwiazdą

Wolisz tequilę sunrise
czy jedynkę
xanaxu?

Dzisiaj strzeliłbym czystą.
Prochy przestają
działać.

W tych lasach nie ma ostatnio
królików…
Pewnie wyłapali je Ruscy.

Masz coś innego do powiedzenia?
Wali szambem
od tego jeziora.

Nie. Nie mam ci nic
do powiedzenia.
Pij, póki oddycha wątroba.

Czysta nie powoduje kaca.
Powoli opada mi trzecia
noga.

Króliki są lekkostrawne.
Trzeba uważać,
otoczyli nas kapusiami…

Wiem i wali tu szambem.
Lepsze są już zlecenia
w miastach.

In the Motel Under the Star

Would you prefer
a tequila sunrise
or a dose of Xanax?

Today, I'll take a shot.
Drugs don't do it
for me anymore.

Lately, there aren't any rabbits
in the forest...
It's almost certain the Russians caught them
all.

Do you have anything else to say?
It's a mess
over here by the lake.

Nope. I don't have anything
else to say to you.
Drink while your liver is still resting.

Taking a shot does not lead to a hangover.
My third leg is slowly falling
off.

Rabbits are easy to digest.
You have to be careful.
They've surrounded us with cabbages...

I know. It's a mess over here.
The city is better regulated.

Morphin Sulfat (2)

Na duńskich wyspach już
nie filetuje się dorszy.
Zatłuszczone fartuchy
przeniosły się
do lasów,
w których błąkają się
przejedzone
bizony.

Chyba pamiętam kilka
szczegółów
z odległych lat
na kontynencie.
Miałaś pałąkowate
odnóża,
ale w niczym to nam
nie przeszkadzało.

Czy nadal czytam
Stefana Themersona?
Myślenie konwergentne
nie sprawdza się
w Kopenhadze po godzinie 23:00.
Wtedy zaczynają gwałtownie
kołysać się
kamienice.

Trzeba coś zrobić,
demografia jest przyczyną
społecznej czkawki.
Królowa wszystko ci
wytłumaczy.
Pensja za przestój
wynosi 60% standardowej
zapłaty.

Morphine Sulfate (2)

One does not filet cod
on the Danish islands.
You take greasy aprons
to the forests
filled with wandering
well-fed bison.

I think I remember a few
details
from over my years
on this continent.
You had bandaged
legs,
but it never bothered
us.

Am I still reading
Stefan Themerson?
Convergent thinking
doesn't fly
in Copenhagen after 11:00 p.m.
That's when folks start
violently rocking
in the tenements.

Something needs to be done,
because, after all, demography
is the cause
of social hiccups.
The Queen will explain
everything to you.
Downtime pay
is 60% of the standard
pay.

Rimbaud

Jest zasadnicza różnica w rozmyślaniu o seksie,
a w samym go uprawianiu
– zwierzył mi się pewien
poeta, główny bywalec lokalnych konkursów
literackich.

Potem upił się do nieprzytomności.
Chodziło
pewnie o Ann,
która nie chciała pójść z nim na zaplecze
po wino.

Po kilku miesiącach
zobaczyliśmy się w metrze.
Miał spocone dłonie i fioletowe usta.
W końcu zaczęliśmy regularnie spółkować
– szepnął.

To chyba wykosiłeś nawet Allana?
– spytałem,
mając na myśli budę
ze starcami recytującymi
z pamięci Francuzów.

Niestety, życie fizyczne
nigdy nie idzie w parze
z duchowym – zrobił zmartwioną minę i wysiadł
szybko na przystanku przy Pałacu Kultury
i Sportu.

Rimbaud

"There is a fundamental difference in thinking about sex
and in the very act of cultivating it,"
a certain poet confided
in me. He was the main participant
in most of the local literary contests.

Afterwards he got blackout drunk.
It probably
was because of Ann,
who didn't want to go
into the back room with him
for wine.

After a couple of months
we saw each other on the subway.
He had sweaty palms and violet lips.
"Eventually we started screwing regularly,"
he whispered to me.

"So, you probably even kicked Allan's ass, too?"
I asked
actually referring to the old shack
with geezers reciting in French
from memory.

"Unfortunately, physical existence
doesn't always match the spiritual
reality," he said with a worried face
as he quickly exited at the stop
near the Palace of Culture
and Sport.

exchange rate

the nights are long and sweaty
errant cars stream by
their high beams
painting prison bars
through her blinds
onto the bare wall

everything seems to
move slower these days
but the world picks up pace
constantly spinning at a
deceptively higher rate
but it's all she can do
to get from bed before
the sun goes down again
to bring the darkness

save those strobes
reminding her
there are others
who breathe the same air
and yet they seem to get
something more than
mere sustenance
out of the exchange

perspective

she continues to see all of this
as some bland pale reflection
discount counterfeit life
boiling under a current of
polished masked civility

every moment she feels
the blood pulsing at her temples
and it's getting increasingly difficult
to remember a time when
this bungeed down rage wasn't there
threatening to explode

acidic fang bared aggression
melting humanity to
steaming puddles on the pavement

from her window
she sees them cross the street
oblivious to just how close
to annihilation they all are

the sign at the crosswalk goes red

AIZIK'S MEATS
LENOX AVE
ESTABLISHED 1890
Allen's Alley
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CONTRIBUTORS

James Benger is the author of several books of poetry and prose. He is on the Board of Directors of The Writers Place and the Riverfront Readings Committee, and is the founder of the 365 Poems In 365 Days online workshop, and is Editor-In-Chief of the anthology series. He lives in Kansas City with his wife and children.

Peter Buzyński, PhD is the author of the chapbook *A Year Alone inside of Woodland Pattern* (Adjunct Press, 2022) and the translator of Martyna Buliżańska's *This Is My Earth* (New American Press, 2019). His first full-length book of poetry, *Infinite Zero*, will be published in 2025 by Writ Large Press. He is currently working on translations of the Polish poets Grzegorz Wróblewski, Anna Matysiak, and Joanna Guzik. His poetry, translations, reviews, and essays have appeared in *The Georgia Review, jacket2, The Brooklyn Rail, jubilat, RHINO, Storm Cellar, Thrush, Prick of the Spindle, Prelude, Your Impossible Voice,* and *Forklift Ohio,* among others. In Fall 2023, Burzyński served as the Postdoctoral Fulbright Scholar in the Slovak Republic teaching graduate courses in literature. In the Summer of 2024, he attended both the ALTA and Bread Loaf Translation residencies as a Fellowship recipient. He is the son of immigrants who call him on the phone every day.

Paul Edward Costa is a poet, spoken word artist, organiser, and teacher. He directs the Outer Haven Poetry Night series, is a full member of the League of Canadian Poets, and a former Poet Laureate for the City of Mississauga. He won the Mississauga Arts Council's Emerging Literary Arts Award and has published in many journals such as *Train: A Poetry Journal, Purely Liminal Magazine,* and *Blank Spaces Magazine.* His third book was recently published by DarkWinter Press and his fourth book, *Some Half-Human Creature Thing,* is currently available from Mosaic Press. As a spoken word

artist, Paul has featured at many poetry reading events such as Art Bar, the Poetry Open Mic at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Shab-e She'r, Laureate City by VerseFest, and the Victoria Poetry Project.

A. Daniyal was born in Lahore, Pakistan, and grew up in a small town in northern Italy. He moved to Canada in 2008. His work has been published in *The Polyglot, The Imagist Magazine, Ahoy Literary, Squid Literary,* among others. He resides in Montreal.

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in *New World Writing, City Brink* and *Tenth Muse.* Latest books: *Subject Matters; Between Two Fires* and *Covert* are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in *Paterson Literary Review, Amazing Stories* and *Cantos.*

Andreas Gripp was born and raised in Treaty 6 Territory (London, Ontario) and in 2024 relocated to Leamington with his wife, Carrie. He's the author of over 30 books of poetry, including *The Sensuous Damned* (2025) and *Clocking the Equus: Poems Selected and New* (2025).

Gregory Wm. Gunn was born in 1960 in Windsor, Ontario. His formative years were spent in a few small towns before lastly settling in London, Ontario in 1970. Engaged in some of the visual arts from a young age, then concentrating on music and writing during his scholastic stretch at Fanshawe College in the early '80s, he has been dutifully refining his skills in both those disciplines ever since. He has been published in various literary periodicals including *The Toronto Quarterly, Side-B Magazine, Inscribed Magazine, Burning Wood, 20 X 20 Magazine, Crack the Spine, Covalence, Blue Lake Review, The Light Ekphrastic,* and many others. He is currently compiling his 13th volume of poems.

Poet, performer and playwright **Penn Kemp** has long been a keen participant/activist in Canada's cultural life, with more than thirty books of poetry, prose and drama; seven plays and ten CDs produced as well as award-winning videopoems. She has been writer-in-residence at universities throughout India and Brazil with her work translated into many languages. Her *poem for peace in many voices*, for instance, is out in 136 languages. New collections include LIVES OF DEAD POETS and ORDINARY / MOVING. Visit her website: pennkemp.weebly.com

A. Michelle Lamarche writes from Muskoka's cottage country. Her first book-length publication of poems is forthcoming from Smashwords.

John B. Lee is the author of nearly one hundred books and is the editor of nearly a dozen anthologies. His most recent title, *The Last Stand,* was published in 2025 by Wet Ink Books. Appointed Poet Laureate of the City of Brantford in perpetuity, he is also Poet Laureate of Norfolk County for life, and was Poet Laureate of the Canada Cuba Literary Alliance (2020-2022). Called "the greatest living poet in English" by George Whipple, he is a recipient of well over one hundred prestigious national and international awards for his writing. He lives with his wife Cathy in a lake house overlooking Long Point Bay on Lake Erie in the town of Port Dover.

Peter Newall has worked variously in a Navy dockyard, as a lawyer and as a musician. He has lived in Australia, Japan, Germany, and now in Odesa, Ukraine, where he fronts a local rhythm and blues band.

John Sweet sends greetings from the rural wastelands of upstate NY. He is a firm believer in writing as catharsis, and in compassionate nihilism. His poetry collections include *No One Starves in A Nation of Corpses* (Analog Submission Press, 2020) and *Not Everything Is About You* (Apathy Press Poets, 2024).

Author of the debut novel *Twelfth House*, and *Shaded Pergola*, a collection of haiku and short poetry featuring her original illustrations, **E.C. Traganas** has published in *The San Antonio Review*, *The Brussels Review*, *Story Sanctum*, *The Society of Classical Poets*, and over a hundred other journals. E.C. Traganas enjoys a professional career as a Juilliard-trained concert pianist & composer, has held over 40 national exhibitions of her artwork, and is the founder/director of *Woodside Writers*, a NYC-based literary forum. Website: elenitraganas.com

Grzegorz Wróblewski was born in 1962 in Gdańsk and grew up in Warsaw. Since 1985 he has been living in Copenhagen. English translations of his work are available in *Our Flying Objects* (trans. Joel Leonard Katz, Rod Mengham, Malcolm Sinclair, Adam Zdrodowski, Equipage, 2007), *A Marzipan Factory* (trans. Adam Zdrodowski, Otoliths, 2010), *Kopenhaga* (trans. Piotr Gwiazda, Zephyr Press, 2013), *Let's Go Back to the Mainland* (trans. Agnieszka Pokojska, Červená Barva Press, 2014), *Zero Visibility* (trans. Piotr Gwiazda, Phoneme Media, 2017), *Dear Beloved Humans* (trans. Piotr Gwiazda, Lavender/Dialogos Books, 2023), *I Really Like Lovers of Poetry* (trans. Grzegorz Wróblewski & Marcus Silcock Slease, Červená Barva Press, 2024), *Tatami in Kyoto* (Literary Waves Publishing, 2024). He has an Asemic writing book, *Shanty Town* (Post-Asemic Press, 2022).

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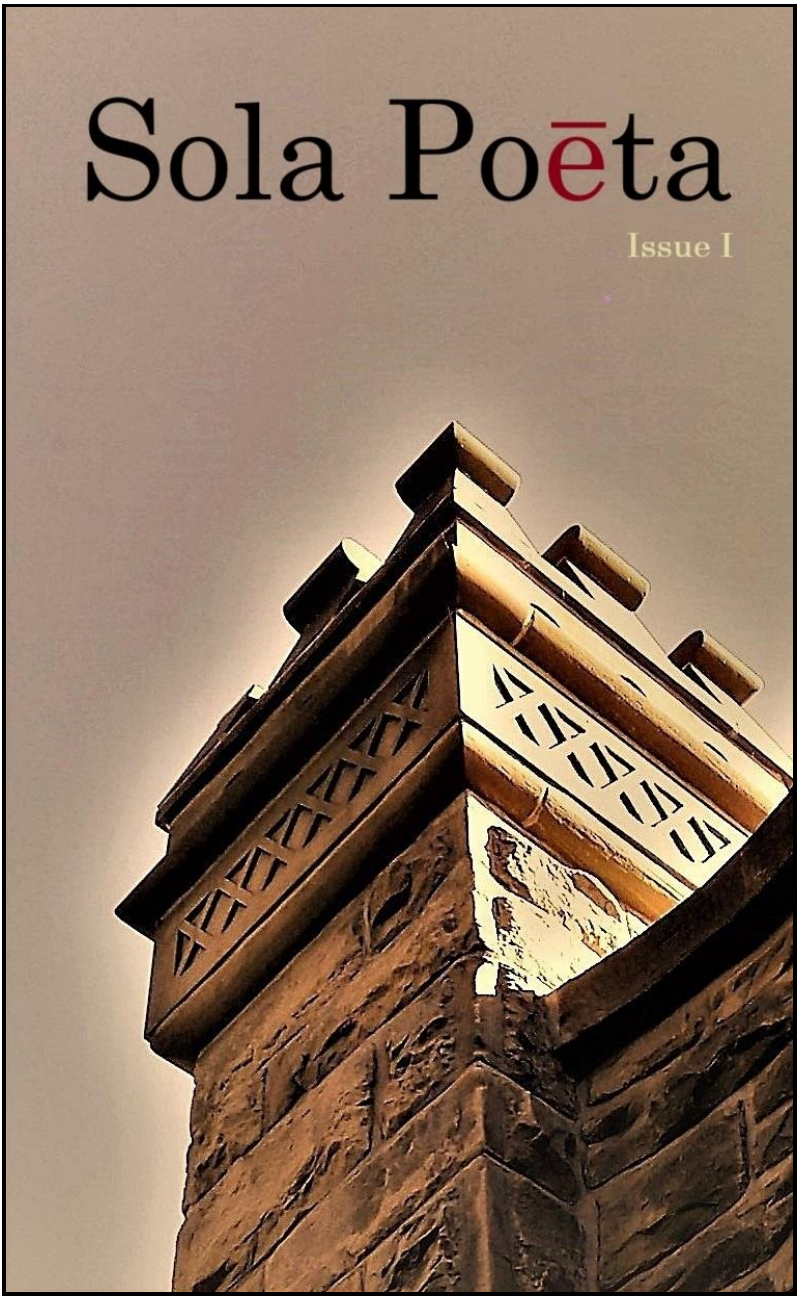

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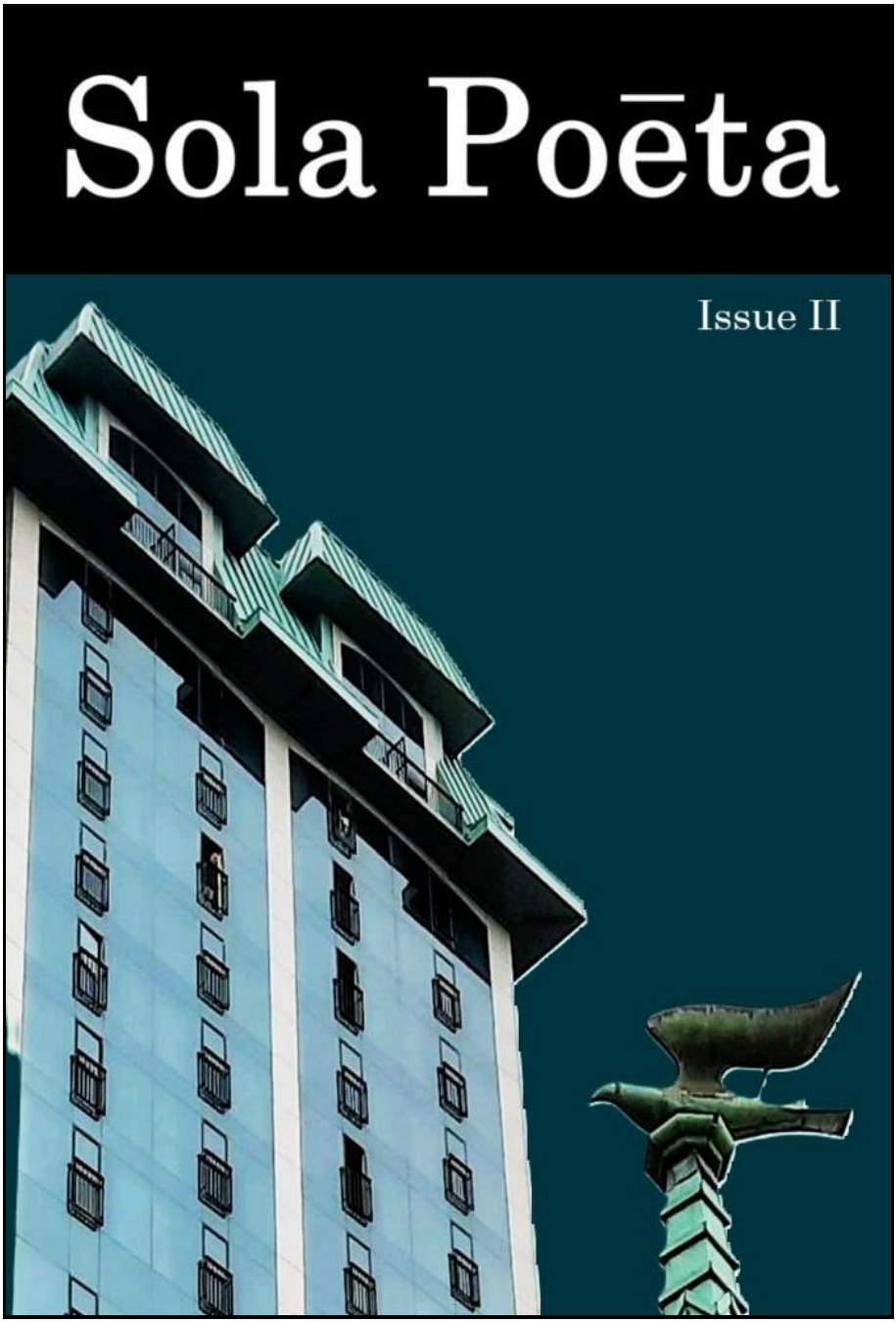

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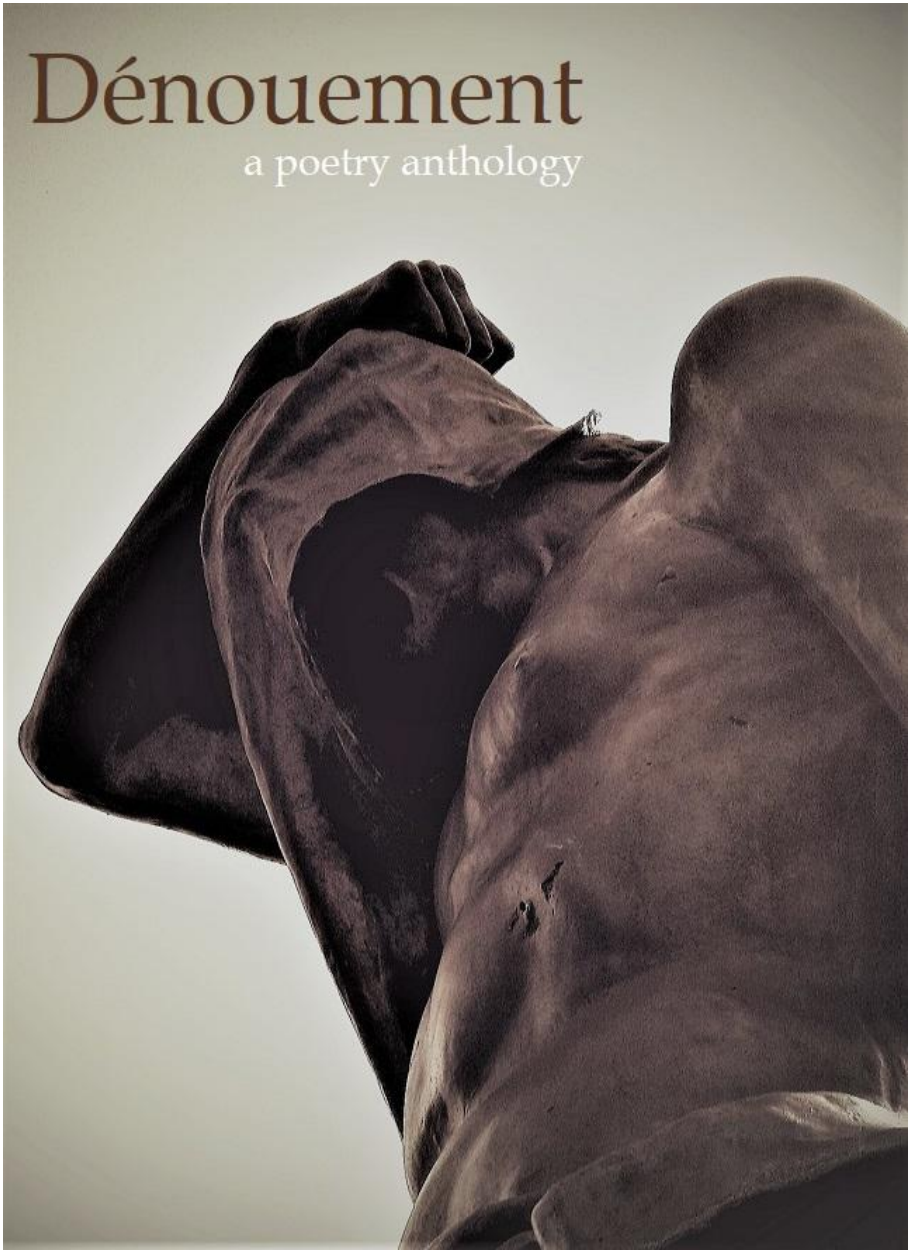

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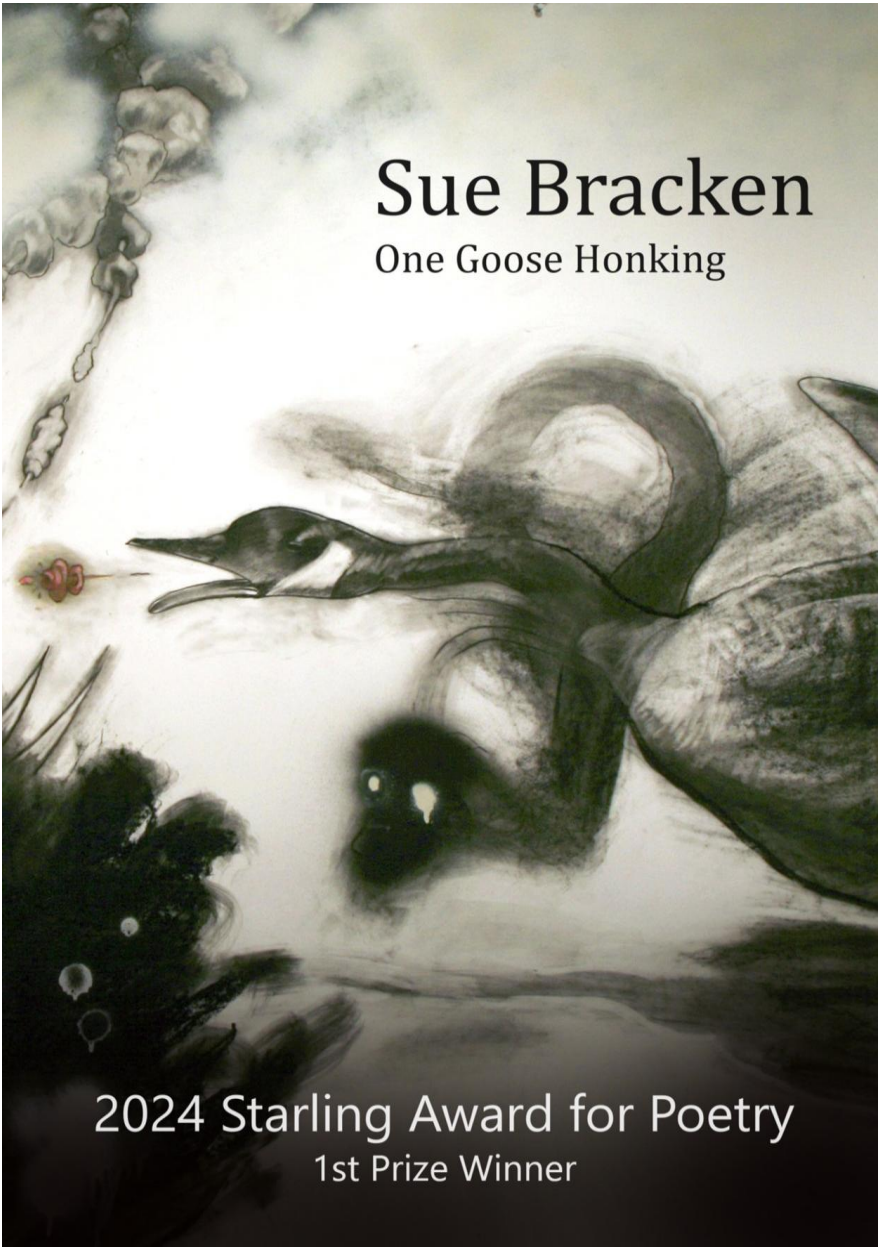

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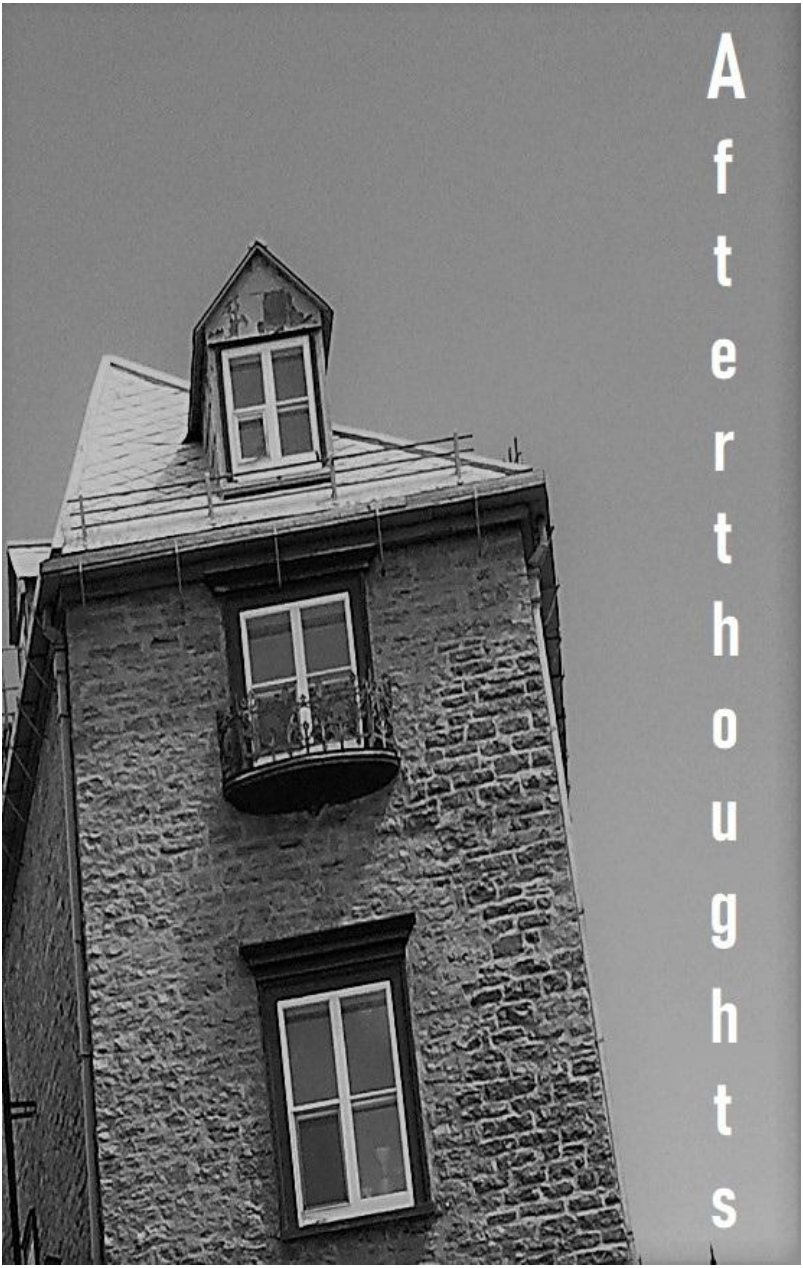

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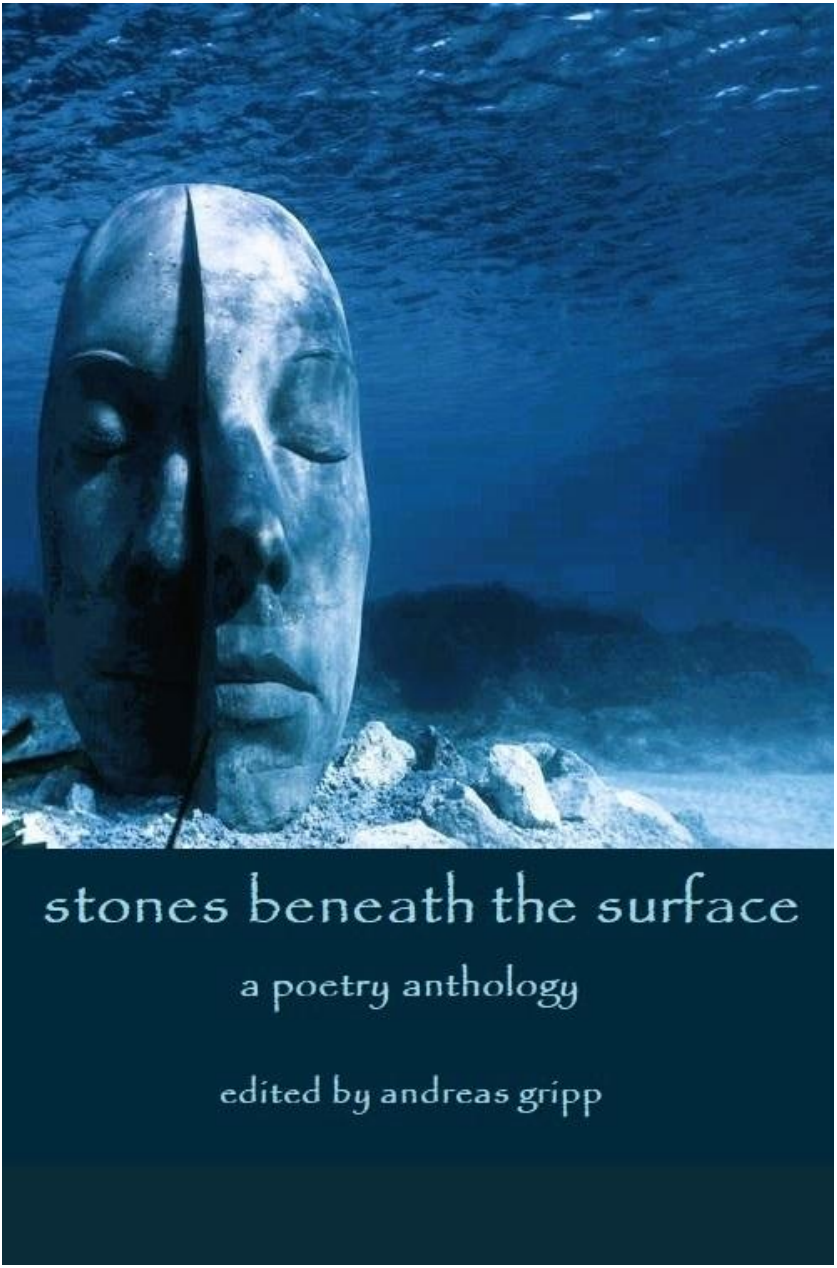

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Please email your submission (up to 5 poems) as a separate attachment
(**MS Word** is strongly preferred).
Please include a brief bio of yourself as well
in case your work is selected for publication.
Email address: **silverstarlingpress@gmail.com**
Response time is within 1 week.
THIS IS AN ONGOING CALL. THERE ARE NO DEADLINES.

There are no particular themes in *Sola Poēta*
other than exceptional writing. The subject matter is open,
though please don't send in any work that is derogatory to or demeans
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No *graphic* violence or pornography please.
Send only new and/or previously unpublished offerings
(We **don't** regard social media sharing as previously published).

We welcome submissions from **ALL** poets (though please keep in mind
the aforementioned), and we especially encourage writing from folks
who are IBPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, Women, People with Disabilities,
and Individuals who have been marginalized.

James Benger
Peter Burzyński
Paul Edward Costa
A. Daniyal
John Grey
Andreas Gripp
Gregory Wm. Gunn
Penn Kemp
A. Michelle LaMarche
John B. Lee
Peter Newall
John Sweet
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Grzegorz Wróblewski

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